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Dig Deeper, Bundy Urges Editors

Washington (AP)—McGeorge Bundy, president of the Ford Foundation, criticized the nation's newspapers yesterday for concentrating unduly on what he called "hard hot news" and ignoring the journalism that goes below the surface and produces analytical stories.

"The American press needs to start prizing its readers more and its headlines less," the former White House aide told a meeting of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. He said, "This does not mean less leg work, it means more. It does not mean less contact with the government, but more.

But it also means visits to universities, better use of libraries, more control of foreign languages, and a refusal to think of all reality only in its relationship to the lead (opening paragraph of a news story)."

The former head of national security



Bundy

affairs in the White House rested his case on three propositions: "The first is that the coming generation of journalists can do these harder kinds of reporting once they know the editor wants it; the second is that plenty of readers want it too, they prefer the reality to the gossip when they get a chance. And the third is that there is more real influence here than anywhere else. "We live in a time when nothing is more relevant, nothing more 'with it,'" Bundy told the editors, "than the journalism which goes below the surface . . . Today's new ideas are tomorrow's hard reality." Bundy cited the recent coverage of the CIA dispute, the controversy over the Warren Commission report, and the Vietnam war as missed opportunities for "thoughtful investigators."

On the CIA issue, said that in all the intensive reporting about it "no one that I saw bothered to attempt a qualitative account of the work that was done with the money. I'm not saying that it would have been an easy job—or that everyone involved would, or even should, have been cooperative. I am saying simply that the job wasn't tried—that one highly relevant question wasn't really asked." Bundy's White House job involved close contact with the CIA.

Earlier, the editors heard Floyd McKissick, national director of the Congress of Racial Equality, bitterly charge that America's newspapers ignore the news and needs of Negroes in their cities "unless there are riots, or one Negro attacks another, or a Negro utters radical statements.

"The newspapers today have two policies," McKissick said: "Ignore it; it will go away. But watch for the riot, that will be newsworthy." He added, "The newspapers today have no lines into the ghetto and have no inkling of what is going on there—what the mood of the black man is, his hopes and his plans and dreams." He offered to provide each editor with a guide to his city's slums "to see the black community from inside."

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